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Quotes and Quips

The vast tree of Truth yields fruits when you nurture it.
Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948)

Suppose a thorn has pierced a man's foot. He picks up another thorn to pull out the one hurting him. After extracting the first with the help of the second, he throws both away. One should use the thorn of knowledge to pull out the thorn of ignorance, then throw away both, and realize God directly. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa (1836-1886)

Amma has not created a particular path. Hinduism is the greatest book on life. Whatever Amma has done is all based on Hinduism. Sakthi Amma, head of the Narayani Peedam of Malaikodi, Tamil Nadu, India

The way to freedom is a way of silence--of silent resolve and silent service. Sadhu Vaswani, (1879-1966) founder the Sadhu Vaswani Mission

Love says, "I am everything." Wisdom says, "I am nothing." Between the two, my life flows. I express it by saying that I am both, and neither, and beyond both. Nisargadatta Maharaj (1897-1981), Hindu sage

Children are lamps to be lit, not vessels to be filled.

Free will is not free--it is a phenomenon bound by cause and effect--but there is something behind the will which is free. Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902)

The board rewrote the definition of science, so that it is no longer limited to the search for natural explanations of phenomena. Associated Press, reporting on the Texas Board of Education

I will do everything that I can as long as I am president of the United States to remind the American people that we are one nation under God, and we may call that God different names, but we remain one nation. Barack Obama, President of the U.S., speaking at the White House on the anniversary of 9/11

In dogmatic religions, heretics are cast out not because they are wrong but because of the possibility that they are right.

Polar bears like snow. Bipolar bears sometimes do, and sometimes don't.

People think focus means saying yes to the thing you've got to focus on. But that's not what it means at all. It means saying no to the hundred other good ideas that there are. You have to pick carefully. Steve Jobs, founder and CEO of Apple, Inc.

Jewish homes have a mezuzah, a small scroll with scripture attached to the doorway for blessings. Some Christians in New York have been doing it, too. Asked why he did it, one responded, "Well, it's good karma." Brian Hallas, Brooklyn resident

There is nothing amazing in the world. Your ignorance shows when you find it so. It all happened long, long ago. What can be amazing? I am you and you are me. I am eternal, birthless, deathless, changeless, secondless. Satguru Yogaswami, (1862-1964) Sri Lankan mystic

Be careful of your thoughts; they may become words at any moment.

Since we cannot change reality, let us change the eyes which see reality. Nikos Kazantzakis, (1883-1957) Greek novelist

We act as though comfort and luxury were the chief requirements of life, when all that we need to make us happy is something to be enthusiastic about. Albert Einstein (1879-1955)

As long as there is searching, Parasiva has not been found, for searching is two, while It is one. Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami (1927-2001), founder of Hinduism Today

Did You Know?

All the Gold in the World

There is really not so much gold on Earth, if you get down to the numbers. This rare metal certainly looks ubiquitous--adorning tall monuments, wealthy women and sacred Hindu temples. But all the gold ever mined through history is estimated to fit in a cube measuring 21 meters on each side. Three-quarters of that was mined in the last hundred years.

The 1.5 tons used at the Sripuram temple, a fabulous amount, would form a cube with only 42 centimeters on each side--the volume of a large microwave oven.

Part of the reason for gold's rarity is that it is a cosmic import. No gold nugget can be synthesized in the depths of our planet. Creating new gold requires a furnace as powerful as an exploding supernova star. Earth's oceans have gold dissolved in the saltwater, an estimated 15,000 tons; but there is no viable process to extract it.

Gold is one of the heaviest naturally occurring atoms, highly dense and ductile. That means that even a small amount can be spread over a large area, in sheets so thin that 200,000 could fit in one inch.

India and China are the largest global consumers today. In India, gold is the most noble of the five metals that form the panchaloka, an alloy used to create items for Hindu temples, including the murti of the main Deity. It is also used to create kavachams, gold armor for the Gods.

Basics of Hinduism

Maya, Illusion and Ultimate Reality

Hindu sages have investigated the nature of existence since time immemorial, going deeper than any other religion or philosophical school. One of the finds is maya, the shifting apparent reality that is sometimes, simplistically, called an illusion.

All of existence is maya, God's mirific energy. Only God is absolutely real. The universe that emanated from God is relatively real--which means it is impermanent, subject to change and dissolution, and experienced differently as the soul matures. This does not imply that maya is nonexistent, or a mere illusion, for it is entirely real when experienced in ordinary consciousness. Its existence is required to lead us to God.

The universe is born, evolves and dissolves in cycles much as the seasons come and go. These cycles are inconceivably immense, ending in mahapralaya when the universe is re-absorbed. All creation, including time and space, dissolve in God. This is His ultimate grace--the evolution of all souls is perfect and complete as they lose individuality and return to Him. Then God exists alone until He again issues forth creation--maya happens once more.

The Vedas state, "Truly, God is One; there can be no second. He alone governs these worlds with His powers. He stands facing beings. He, the herdsman, after bringing forth all worlds, reabsorbs them at the end of time."